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THE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR

Ash Wednesday

JEFF HEERSPINK, LEAD PASTOR

This year, Ash Wednesday is February 14. This gives a powerful yet potentially difficult and stretching opportunity for us to assess our loves.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the Season of Lent. Andy Butler stated last year in his article in the newsletter: "The idea (of Lent) was not to give up stuff, because it sucks to give up stuff, and being a Christian sucks. The idea was to remove something important from our lives, as Christians, so that we can replace that space in our hearts and lives with God, his will, Word and purpose." Or could we say that Lent is about replacing the things that we love in this world with the God of love?

As we kick off Lent this year, I want to invite you to a special gathering hosted by Celebrate Recovery at 6:30 when we have an Ash Wednesday Service. This will be a time to reflect on the priorities in our lives and hopefully place a new commitment and priority on loving Jesus.

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Coming this Spring: 3M Classes **Membership, Maturity, & Ministry.**

BILL THORNTON, TEACHING PASTOR

With a view toward developing fully devoted Christ followers at FSNC, on a regular basis we offer a series of classes called 3M which provide teaching on Membership, Maturity, and Ministry.

The Membership class helps folks become better acquainted with what it means to be a part of our F Street family. The Maturity class focuses on the habits that will foster spiritual growth in our lives. The Ministry class will explore how each of us is uniquely shaped to serve the Lord and His people.

Each class is offered in one session and will occur following the Sunday morning worship service that day. You will want to sign up when opportunity is given in the coming weeks so we will know how many to plan for. Our upcoming class schedule is planned as follows:

Membership, Sunday, April 7

Maturity, Sunday, April 14

Ministry, Sunday, April 24

Please feel free to contact me with questions or to sign-up for these classes.

Revelation Class **To Be Offered on Monday Nights**

BILL THORNTON, TEACHING PASTOR

One of the most puzzling yet powerful books in the Bible is the book of Revelation. It is filled with visions and images that point to Jesus' return as the ultimate King, where He will restore His people and usher in the new creation. Beginning January 29th, I plan to offer a 12-week class where we will seek to understand both the first-century world of the book's original recipients, as well as learn what the book's message means for us today. Along the way, we also plan to see how Revelation has been understood during different periods of church history. In the process, my prayer is that we will have opportunity to behold both the timelessness and trustworthiness of God's Word!

We will meet on Monday nights from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Fireside Room. For more information, and to let me know of your interest to enroll in this class, please talk to me before or after church on Sundays or email me at bill@fstreetchurch.org!

The Seven Deadly Sins: Part 5 - Against the Thoughts of Anger

ANDY BUTLER, TECH & BENEVOLENCE LEADER

This time, I'm going to start out with an entry from the Handbook by Evagrius of Pontus, which I've been basing these writings on.

1. Against the soul's thoughts that feed on anger against someone who received many good things from us and then complained about them:

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up (Gal. 6:9).

Some anger is obvious. When your friends fought each other at school or at recess growing up, they were clearly angry with each other. You could see the physical and emotional consequences of the anger quite literally on their faces. When I punched my friend Ethan in the nose in seventh grade, I was clearly angry with him and everyone could tell, because Ethan's nose was bloody, and I was made to sit out for the remainder of PE class. And please don't worry everyone! I apologized, we worked it out, and by all accounts Ethan is doing great.

There is another type of anger that Evagrius draws to our attention with his thought and scriptural response above. This kind of anger is not so obvious, and as Evagrius puts it, "the soul feeds on it." Maybe we can successfully push down this anger or hide it while we're around others, but it's there. It often starts as a thought, or set of thoughts, that aren't necessarily based on anything true. It might even be a thought about someone we are close to, and we fixate on why they would have reacted to us in a particular way, or why they said or did this particular thing to us. We all have thoughts that, when and if we really think about them, probably weren't truly worth the spent time. But as soon as we've entertained these thoughts, we deeply struggle to simply let them pass. These thoughts of anger, at minimum, might form into bitterness or resentment towards a sister or brother in Christ. They also might, and often do, form into the more obvious, explosive anger I mentioned first.

Anger is sort of broadly, culturally defined as "our natural response to environmental threats." Psychology Today defines it as "what often arises when we feel our boundaries have been violated." Jesus tells us to love the Lord with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our minds. Part of loving the Lord with all our minds is remembering that with each thought we have, we are also presented with choices. Choices to entertain our thoughts or not, and how much value we assign to them. We can ask ourselves whether or not our thoughts are connected to Jesus and the fruits of the spirit, or connected to anything that will lead to good for ourselves and good for whatever or whomever we're thinking about. Paul teaches the Corinthians and us to take our thoughts captive. Within Christianity, there is a clear emphasis on what we are to be thinking about and meditating on. As Christians we are free to point our focus on grace, truth, God's Word, whatever is righteous, pure, holy - all of that! We are free to choose to dwell on these things because of the freedom we have in Christ. Moreover, the hope of the Gospel tells us all good things will ultimately defeat and replace all things false, negative and evil.

I believe most anger grows in us based on what and how we are thinking. The book of James tells us to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Jesus was faced with many opportunities to become angry when he was on trial for the crime of simply being who he was, the Son of God. Yet he chose not to resist, petition for himself or use his power to harm anyone (all things he easily could have done as also fully God). In fact, when Peter thought he was acting on Jesus' behalf by chopping off the ear of a high priest's servant, Jesus corrected Peter and reattached the servant's ear. However, we do see Jesus becoming angry at the sight of injustice or people taking advantage of the poor. We do see Jesus channel his anger in defense of others when it really mattered. If we are to follow Jesus, we should seek to channel our anger in this way also. Instead of letting resentment build up over time or letting anger permeate our thinking, which only leads to being an angry person; we should try to take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ. Then our anger won't be misplaced, and it won't present itself as explosive, abusive or resentful. It will present itself as righteous and pointed in the direction and way of Jesus.

Neighborhood Lenten Prayer Nights

JEFF HEERSPINK, LEAD PASTOR

Every First Wednesday of the month, there is a gathering of neighborhood Pastors and Church Leaders at F Street for a time of prayer. We gather with a passion for Jesus and a love for our neighborhood. In the past this had led to some prayer nights shared among the churches. This year we are planning to gather at the different churches during the Lenten season to pray together for our neighborhood. We will be starting on the second Friday of Lent, or the last Friday in February (23rd), and meet for 5 weeks at 7:00p.

As we plan to host and present these community nights of prayer and worship, I want to encourage you to consider the opportunity to join. Each church brings a different set of gifts, traditions, facilities, and practices, and each church has the same heart for God and the neighborhood so this can be a powerful and joy filled opportunity where we will be stretched and blessed to share this time together.

Consider going out to dinner with your loved one(s) and then attending the Friday night service to be with Jesus and others. Consider going to the prayer services before going out after starting off your Friday Nights with Jesus before your friends. I hope that all the churches including F Street have a good representation at these gatherings to pray and worship.

Here are the dates and the locations:

- February 23: F Street Neighborhood Church
- March 1: Trinity Lutheran (12th and H)
- March 8: Calvary Lutheran (28th and Franklin)
- March 15: Grace Chapel (16th and A)
- March 22: No Greater Love (16th and South)

Revelation: an Invitation for Creatives

JEAN STRYKER, RESIDENT ARTIST

Beginning Monday, January 29, Open Studio will merge with the Revelation course being taught by Pastor Bill Thornton.

Revelation: an Overview
Mondays, January 29-April 29
7-8:30 pm
Fireside Room

This is an opportunity for those with an interest in creative expression to learn to apply scripture to their creative practice. You could make a painting, write a poem or song, make a tie-dye hanging or a quilt; anything you like to do, influenced by the teaching from Revelation.

We will provide panels and acrylic paint, plus paper and colored pencils. If you need other supplies or have questions, email jean@fstreetchurch.org.

Committed to Christ

JEFF HEERSPINK, LEAD PASTOR

Last month, I shared that it is my hope to write regularly about the 5 C's (Committed to Christ, Engaged in Community, Transformed in Character, Fulfilling your Calling, and Developing your Competencies) or what we at F Street have adopted as the Description of a Discipled Person. Our hope is that this description will give you something great to strive for in terms of your personal spiritual growth.

The description of the first "5C" states this:

- Be Committed to Christ: Consistently demonstrates the following:

- An authentic, growing relationship with Jesus Christ
- A love for the Bible and a belief in the authority and historical reliability of Scripture
- An ability and willingness to communicate the truths of the Bible in a practical and relevant way.

These are just a few ways that a committed relationship with Christ can be demonstrated. Jesus tells us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)." It is through a relationship with Jesus that we get to know God and find our hope, our salvation from the sin and brokenness of this world. "And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth (John 17:3)."

So why all the emphasis on the Bible? Well, John tells us: And we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. If someone claims, "I know God," but doesn't obey God's commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. But those who obey God's word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did (1 John 2:3-6)."

This article is intended to encourage you to seek Jesus, to passionately pursue him, to chase him with all your love and life. It is our desire that as you get to know Jesus that you will long to obey Him simply because you love him.

So where and how do we grow in this relationship?

- Believe; acknowledge that God's Word is the authority for truth, not our culture or our own ideas and therefore Jesus is who he says he is and we can trust our lives to him.
- Read the Word; open your Bible to learn about who God is and what he wants for you and from you. Look for things to obey and promises to claim for your life. Put into practice what you are learning.
- Pray; take time to engage with Jesus. Like any relationship, take time to talk and to listen, take time to share the hurts and express your gratitude but also learn to slow down and listen.

One of the best passages on being committed to Christ is John 15, which states: "Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me (John 15:14)." I encourage you to reflect on this passage throughout the week and choose to make your relationship with Christ the priority in your life.

F Street Youth

SAGE PETERSON, YOUTH DIRECTOR

Woah is there a lot going on with FSU this month! To make sure you're up to date with everything, here are a couple of dates to remember:

Feb. 1 - Middle School Retreat signups are open! In April, we're excited to be returning to MSR and hope your student will join us! Don't wait around though because there's only a limited number of spots in the camp.

Feb. 4 - Have your "Walk" signups turned in BEFORE this date! The Walk is a 9-week class that is open and encouraged for all students! During these nine weeks we will be reading through the book of Luke.

Feb. 17 - The 2nd Day of Love is happening! On this day we will be serving all over town all for God. If you participated last year, you know how fun of a time that we had. If you would like to sign up as a student you can by using the link or by picking up a flyer, the cost to participate is \$15. We're also looking for volunteers for this event, if you have ever wanted to get a glimpse into youth ministry this is a great opportunity. Volunteers help lead work groups, help with food, and game time. If you want to participate the cost is free and you can sign up using the online link or by picking up a flyer!

*must be able to pass a background check to volunteer.

I know that's a lot of information, but we want to make sure your student doesn't miss out on any of the fun! If you have any questions, contact Sage Peterson at sage@fstreetchurch.org.

Worship Team Update

ADAM WOOCKMAN, WORSHIP LEADER

1 Chronicles 16:23-25 Let the whole earth sing to the Lord! Each day proclaim the good news that he saves. Publish His glorious deeds among the nations. Tell everyone about the amazing things He does. Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise!

My hope and prayer is that we at F Street Church hold these verses in our hearts daily. That we may be bold to proclaim among the neighborhood that the Lord is good and that He alone saves. That we may daily sing to Him with joy and gladness but that we also sing to Him while we walk through the valleys. He is always worthy to be praised!

I wanted to take this opportunity to give our newest team member a shout out. Sarah Mann has joined the worship team and her first Sunday started out with a bang. I suddenly got pretty sick a few weeks ago and it was the first Sunday Sarah was going to sing with us. In the flurry of trying to figure everything out at 8am, Sarah stepped up with Richard to be able to bring some worship music to the congregation. It wasn't easy but they were both willing and confident to lead together. I am grateful very much to them for leading that day. I'm very grateful to have a great team of people that love to sing praises to our God and lead in front of a lot of people. Next time you see Sonya, Jenny, Sarah, Richard, or Micah let them know you appreciate them serving the Lord with their talents. Do all things for the glory of God!!



F Street Arts: Painting in Progress

JEAN STRYKER, RESIDENT ARTIST

If you attend Sunday morning services at F Street, you may see some familiar folks in a painting on display on the altar. The new painting is a contemporary take on “The Road to Emmaus,” a classic painting that shows Jesus walking and talking with two disciples. F Street’s painting shows three F Streeters (Johnny and Sarah Mann and Christopher Wagy) walking and talking together on a sidewalk in downtown Lincoln. The three are surrounded by a halo. The work is being displayed in progress, so each Sunday it will be a little more developed than the previous week.

The painting is about our call to live out our faith and minister to one another as we walk together through life. Those interactions can create a sacred space where the Holy Spirit is present and working. That doesn’t require a special environment, it can take place anywhere, even on the streets of downtown Lincoln. It can happen between ordinary people like Johnny, Sarah, and Christopher. Or any of us!

F Street’s current preaching series is “Luke: On the Road with Jesus.” Each of us is invited to walk with Jesus through life just like his disciples did 2000 years ago. The Holy Spirit is willing to walk beside us, and F Street Church is a community of people who can walk with us and need us to walk with them. Life is a journey that's most successful if we have a few companions who love us and will follow Jesus with us.

Missionary Corner

Email Updates

To be added to regular email updates about the church, email fstreetchurch@gmail.com

Prayer Requests

If you have any prayer requests, please fill out the back of the communication card or come up to the front after church service

Up to Date

To keep information up to date, please fill out a communication card or email Hollie at hollie@fstreetchurch.org

Interested in Baptism?

BILL THORNTON,
TEACHING PASTOR

Perhaps you have been present when a friend or family member has been baptized, and you have wondered about whether you should experience this, too. We believe that baptism is a significant event in one's life as a Christ follower, and as a church family we want to provide the spiritual encouragement and understanding that should accompany your decision to be baptized. If you are interested in learning more about this, please contact me or Pastor Jeff.

In Christ, Pastor Bill
Thornton

The Howells

Dear friends,

Joshua Daniel arrived at 21:04 on Thursday, January 18.
3.49 kg (7.7 lbs) . . . Our smallest baby, but a truly handsome gift from God!

All went well, and we experienced grace upon grace.

However, Michelle and Joshua needed to stay in the hospital for additional treatment and recovery and are looking at an expected release on Thursday.

We are thankful for health and new life. And we love to watch Leah, Lydia, and Aaron smother little Joshua with love! All are eager to be reunited at home soon.

Praise God:

- for a safe and smooth delivery
- health and new life
- great care at the hospital, and positive relationships made with the staff. (Michelle is known and loved there!)
- a strong community here that helped fill in some gaps at home during delivery and recovery
- that His ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:9). And that he cares for us.

Thank you for standing with us,

AJ, Michelle, Leah, Lydia, Aaron, and Little Joshua



2024

February

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28 10:30am - Sunday Service	29 Job 1 7pm - Revelation Class	30 Job 2 6:30am - Prayer 6 pm - Youth Group	31 Job 3 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	1 Job 4 5:30pm - FoodNet	2 Job 5	3
4 10:30am - Sunday Service	5 Job 6 7pm - Revelation Class	6 Job 7 6:30am - Prayer 6pm - Youth Group	7 Job 8 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	8 Job 9 5:30pm - FoodNet	9 Job 10	10
11 10:30am - Sunday Service	12 Job 11 7pm - Revelation Class	13 Job 12 6:30am - Prayer 6pm - Youth Group	14 Job 13 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery Ash Wednesday	15 Job 14 5:30pm - FoodNet	16 Job 15	17
18 10:30am - Sunday Service	19 Job 16 7pm - Revelation Class	20 Job 17 6:30am - Prayer 6 pm - Youth Group	21 Job 18 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	22 Job 19 5:30pm - FoodNet	23 Job 20 7pm - Prayer Service	24
25 Block Party 10:30am - Sunday Service	26 Job 21 7pm - Revelation Class	27 Job 22 6:30am - Prayer 6pm - Youth Group	28 Job 23 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	29 Job 24 5:30pm - FoodNet		

Birthdays

- 1st - Pamela Mock
- 2nd - Delilah Vacek
- 5th - Kelli Wenzel
- 7th - Ronda Simpson
- 13th - Marcia Thornton
- 14th - Carlos Gomez
- 16th - Henry Connett
- 17th - Kim Clark
- 18th - Elizabeth Vacek
- 19th - Bill Thornton
- 24th - Ramon Gable
- 26th - Dori Stevens

Anniversaries

- 11th - Rodrick & Kristen Langford
- 26th - Chad & Bonnie Chapman